

KENDAL TOWN COUNCIL

Audit, Grants and Charities Committee

Thursday, 29th. January 2009

PRESENT: Councillors Chris Mayho (Chairman), John Bateson, Paul Beavan, Rob Boden and Geoff Cook.

OFFICERS: John Hutchinson (Town Treasurer), Margaret Graham (Secretary)

510/08/09 MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF 23RD OCTOBER 2008

Members' attention was drawn to the fact that the Section of the Local Government Act 1972 referred to in Minute 325/08/09 (Paragraph 3) should be **137**, not 139.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above amendment, the minutes of the meeting held on 23rd October 2008 be accepted and approved as a correct record.

511/08/09 MATTERS ARISING

Referring to Minute 325/08/09. Councillor Boden pointed out that the Council's discretionary spending Under Section 137 is a finite amount based on the electorate. It would help Members to know exactly how much can be spent under Section 137 "for the good of the community".

The Town Treasurer had spoken to CALC about this and it was agreed that he should try to identify Section 137 items for the 2010/11 budget, to ensure that the total did not exceed the statutory limit.

RESOLVED that the Town Treasurer be requested to try to identify Section 137 items for the 2010/2011 budget.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve that, in respect of the Town Council's statutory powers, only Section 137 items are so identified in the Annual Accounts.

512/08/09 TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the draft Terms of Reference for the Committee. It was felt that, in addition, the Terms of Reference needed to reflect which Charity(ies) the Committee can deal with.

This arose out of the Auditor's findings that, for reasons appertaining to the nature of the beneficiaries, the Dowker Bindloss Charity has to be treated as an entirely separate entity from Town Council meetings, and recorded as such. The Town Treasurer confirmed that the Committee could deal with applications (for grants) to the Schools of Science and Arts Charity.

RESOLVED that the Terms of Reference, as written, be adopted, subject to an amendment to reflect that the Committee can consider grant applications to the Schools of Science and Arts Charity.

GRANT APPLICATIONS

513/08/09 Women's International Arts Festival

The Brewery had written to advise that, for various reasons, the Women's International Arts Festival planned for 2009 would not now take place. Members felt that this was very regrettable. It was proposed that the £5,000 allocated for the Festival in 2009 be put back into the grants fund, for re-allocation as required.

RESOLVED that the Brewery be thanked for the information; and

RECOMMENDED that Council approve that the £5,000 allocation be returned to the grants fund for re-allocation as required.

514/08/09 Young Cumbria

The Committee considered a letter from Young Cumbria outlining progress on the building work at the Kendal Lads/Girls Club, and seeking financial support to complete the work. The amount had not been specified.

It was understood that work had stopped because the building contractor had gone out of business and new quotes for the work were higher than the original. Members felt that, in the current economic climate, Young Cumbria should not be expected to pay more than necessary for the work and should be asked to re-examine the quotes with a view to finding a better deal. It was suggested that the Town Council should write to Young Cumbria along these lines, indicating its willingness to offer financial support but seeking clarification on how much was needed before a grant was offered.

RESOLVED that the Town Treasurer be asked to write to Young Cumbria, seeking clarification on the situation; and

RECOMMENDED that Council approve that a sum not exceeding £1,500 be set aside to support Young Cumbria, pending clarification of the situation.

Note: Councillor Paul Beavan declared a personal and prejudicial interest in the application because of his involvement with the organisation.

515/08/09 Westmorland Youth Orchestra

Members considered an application (deferred from October 2008 because of lack of funds) for a contribution towards the purchase of musical instruments. It was decided to check with the WYO whether the funding situation had been resolved in the *following* interim.

RESOLVED that Westmorland Youth Orchestra be contacted to ascertain if funding is still required; and

RECOMMENDED that, if funding is still required, Council approve a grant of up to £300.

516/08/09 North West Air Ambulance

Members considered a request to support an identified need for a second aircraft and the ongoing costs of the service. The Town Treasurer reported that the Council had previously donated £1,000 to the Charity. Members felt that the request was worthy of support.

RECOMMENDED that Council approve a grant of £1,000.

517/08/09 Kendal Rugby Club

The Town Treasurer presented a late request from the Rugby Club for funding for a Youth Tour to Jersey for the Under 17's and Under 19's Colts in April this year. It was agreed that Members needed time to study the application and it was

RESOLVED that Members e-mail their comments on the request to the Chairman, and the Committee's recommendations be reported to Council.

518/08/09 FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR NINE MONTHS ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2008

The Town Treasurer presented the financial statement of actual expenditure to date against budget for the nine months up to 31st December 2008. The main points to note were:-

- a) The total favourable variance of £13,065 was, in the main, attributed to the sale of four paintings (income of £10,745 – although this was ring-fenced for the Arts and Heritage Committee.
- b) Overspending on the Allotments were the result of water charges for previous years.
- c) The overall position was satisfactory.

Members were concerned that expenditure set aside for projects by the Highways Committee was still unused. The Town Treasurer explained that the problem was not the funding, but finding ways to get the work commissioned.

A position statement on the Development Funds was also provided. The balance of uncommitted funds (2008/09) is £75.

RESOLVED that the Financial Statement and Development Fund position statement be received.

519/08/09 RISK ASSESSMENTS

The Treasurer presented, in a revised and simplified format, revised schedules of Risk Assessments covering:-

Fraud	Liability	Theft	Lone Worker
Use of Ladders	General Office	Garage/Workshop	
Fire, Terror, Vandalism and other		Drilling	

The Schedules outlined the scale of the risk (1 – 5), action(s) necessary to eliminate or minimise risk, action(s) taken and/or outstanding, and whether or not insurance was needed and/or in place.

Councillor Beavan raised the point that the Council had currently had no mechanism for recording mileage/petrol consumption for the Town Council's van. The Town Treasurer reassured Members that he regularly checks the receipts for fuel, and had never found any reason to warrant carrying out further investigations. However, having established that there was currently no system for recording this expenditure, Members agreed to ask the Treasurer to introduce a mechanism to check mileage and fuel consumption of the Town Council's van.

The Town Treasurer was congratulated on the format for the Risk Assessments, which were clear, thorough and easy to follow.

Arising out of the Risk Assessments and Members' concerns about methods of working, the Town Treasurer confirmed that there was a small budget available for staff training (for example, the recent First-Aid Training undertaken by the Town Clerk and the Administration Officer). It was suggested that it might be helpful to identify particular current and future training needs for part-time staff (e.g. use of ladders), and also to check the guidelines on the use of VDUs for staff who used computers (eye tests, etc).

RESOLVED that the Risk Assessments be noted, and the Town Treasurer be requested to introduce a mechanism for checking mileage and related fuel consumption.

The meeting finished at 9:00 pm.